

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, and 7-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U. S. Patent Application Publication No. US2004/0077295 of Hellring et al. ("Hellring"); rejected claims 21 and 22 under Sect. 103(a) as unpatentable over Hellring in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,579,153 of Uchikura et al.; rejected claim 23 under Sect. 103(a) as unpatentable over Hellring in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,310,019 of Kakizawa et al.; and rejected claim 24 under Sect. 103(a) as unpatentable over Hellring in view of Uchikura et al., in further view of Kakizawa et al.

Claims 1-3, 7-10, and 21-24 remain pending.

Applicants respectfully traverse the four rejections made by the Examiner under Sect. 103(a). The base reference applied in each of the four rejections is Hellring. In response, Applicants submit herewith an English translation of their Japanese priority document, i.e, Japanese patent application no. 2001-366938, filed in Japan on November 30, 2001, along with a statement of accuracy signed by the translator. Applicants submit this English translation in order to rely on their foreign priority date of November 30, 2001. Since the earliest U.S. filing date of Hellring is the filing date of provisional application no. 60/401,109, filed on August 5, 2002, which is later than Applicants' priority date, Hellring is not prior art against the present application. Therefore, none of the four rejections under Sect. 103(a) made by the Examiner, can stand. Applicants therefore request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections and allow the present application.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request the allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

If there is any fee due in connection with the filing of this Statement, please charge the fee to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

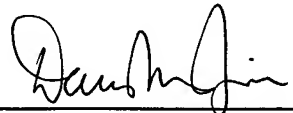
Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: January 19, 2006

(for)

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